News Release
Communiqué

Ontario

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Ministère de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée

For Immediate Release
July 31, 2007
2007/nr-164

MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT ELIMINATING MULTI-BED WARDS THROUGH UPGRADES AT OLDER LONG-TERM CARE HOMES ACROSS PROVINCE

Redeveloping 35,000 Long-Term Care Beds Over the Next 10 Years

TORONTO – The McGuinty government will be redeveloping 35,000 older long-term care beds over the next 10 years to ensure equitable access to quality long-term care home accommodation, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

"All long-term care home residents deserve to have access to the best services and features our long-term care homes can offer," Smitherman said. "We will be redeveloping our older long-term care homes to give residents a higher quality of life in a more comfortable, home-like environment."

To ensure equitable access to this program, the government will address the unique needs of small homes and non-profit groups. The government has also committed to a pilot project to redevelop beds at the Bluewater Rest Home in Zurich, Ontario to determine the necessary supports to ensure that small and rural communities are able to participate fully in this redevelopment.

"The government is to be applauded for moving ahead with this ambitious renewal program that will give tens of thousands of long-term care home residents access to high quality accommodations," said Karen Sullivan, Executive Director of the Ontario Long Term Care Association. "This program will address the disparity in building design, quality and standards that exist between older long-term care homes and new homes."

Beginning in 2008, the government plans to begin redeveloping about 3,500 beds annually over the next 10 years. The province's 14 Local Health Integration Networks together with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care will be prioritizing which projects go forward for renewal each year.

This is the latest example of how the McGuinty government has achieved results in long-term care. Other initiatives include:

- Increasing funding for long-term care by nearly $800 million since 2003;
- Increasing funding for the long-term care food allowance 33.6 per cent since July 2003;
- Funding 6,100 new front-line staff, including 2,300 nurses;
- Opening 7,712 new long-term care beds since October 2003.

Today's initiative is part of the McGuinty government's plan for innovation in public health care, building a system that delivers on three priorities – keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

2008-00206/

-30-

Media Contacts:

David Spencer
Minister's Office
416-327-4320

David Jensen
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
416-314-6197

Members of the general public: 1-866-532-3161

This news release, along with other media materials, such as matte stories and audio clips, on other subjects, are available on our website at: http://www.health.gov.on.ca under the News Media section.

For more information on achievements in health care, visit: www.resultsontario.gov.on.ca.

Disponible en français.